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thoughts in Verse

CLIFFORD HAYDEN

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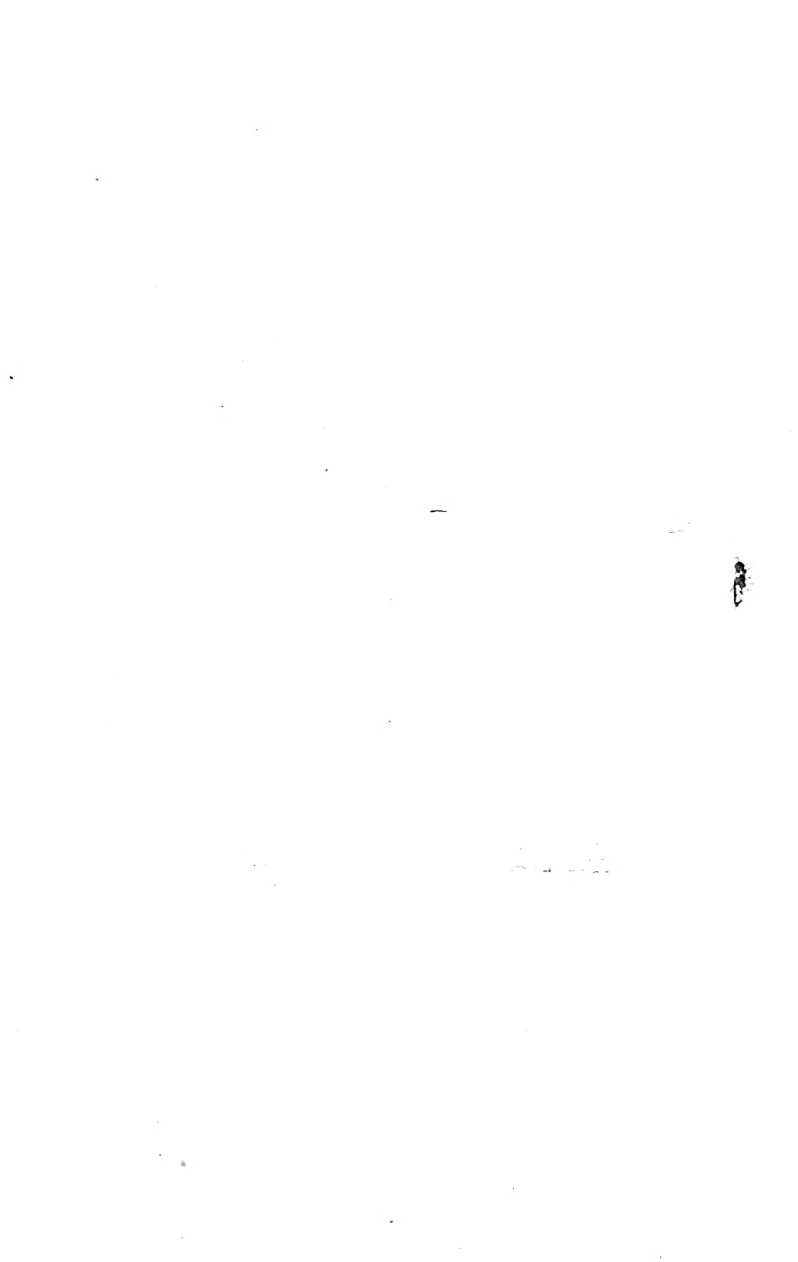
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THOUGHTS IN VERSE

BY
CLIFFORD HOWARD



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*To the
inspiration of my thoughts
this little volume
is affectionately dedicated.*

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THOUGHTS IN VERSE

A LOVE SONG.

'TIS just one month to-day, my love,
 Since our hearts bespoke
 The fettered thought which oft had sought
 Expression to evoke;
Since we in love were plighted, dear,
 Forever and forever.
And nought in life—no pain nor strife,—
 Nor death can e'er dis sever
The bond that ever stronger grows,
The love that ever brighter glows
 Beyond the heart's endeavor.

Yes, one sweet month ago, my love,
 A Sabbath night in May;
It seems a year, and yet, my dear,
 It seems but yesterday,
For in the realm of love, sweetheart,
 There are no days, no hours,
Nought but the rhyme and tinkling chime
 In love's bright, airy towers,
That soar above the mortal world
Where dreamlit symphonies unfurled
 Are love's eternal flowers.

This happy, happy month, my love,
Is but the wak'ning dawn—
The morning ray—of love's long day;
And when this life has gone
And loving hearts are still, dear love,
And star lights faintly quiver,
As over all the shadows fall
Across the silent river,
Immortal love in myst'ry deep
'Mid heaven-lighted dreams will sleep
Forever and forever.

THERE IS NO SIN.

IF there in nature be a primal cause,
Then must it be supreme omnipotence,
Unfettered by conditions or by laws,
Creator through almighty immanence.

All life is but the breath of this one soul,
All things are but the varied forms of life,
Each is a part of that eternal whole,
Whose all-abounding oneness knows no strife;

For perfect harmony is force supreme,
And out of peace can come no strife or wrong;
That which a clashing discord oft may seem
Is but man's ignorance of nature's song.

THE ROSE.

IF thou couldst read the thoughts that dwell
Embodied in this flower
And know the truth that they would tell
Within their silent power,
Then wouldst thou learn the love supreme
Of one whose ev'ry hope and dream,
Of one whose life hath grown to be
Illumined by his love for thee.

But ah, to thee the rose is naught
Beyond a moment's pleasure,
Forgotten like the passing thought
Of some sweet, idle pleasure.
Perchance, howe'er, the soul that glows
Within the bosom of the rose
May kiss thee ere it doth depart
And find its heaven in thy heart.

NIGHT.

GO, silent night, from me!
Thy very nullity of life
Doth cause the unrealities to live
And, by thy solemn impotency, give
An energy to thee
To pierce the heart's existing strife
With the relentless, poignant knife
Of memory.

Come, silent night, and bless
The weary soul that laboreth
To rest within the shades of dreamless sleep—
Blest acolyte of thy supernal deep,
That in its cold caress
Doth e'er commingle life and death
And whisper in its luring breath,
“Forgetfulness.”

LOVE'S NOCTURNE.

'MID the shadows softly falling,
Come the elfs of dreamland calling,
 "Good-night, good-night,"—
Comes the tinkle, tinkle, tinkle
 Of the distant, frosty bells,
Faintly ringing, slowly swinging
 As their melody impels,
 "Good-night, my love, good-night;
 All sorrows now take flight;
Then gently sleep in slumbers deep—
 Good-night, my love, good-night."

Fairy melodies are stealing,
Gently, faintly, softly pealing,
 "Good-night, good-night,"
While the tiny, tuneful tapping
 Of the snowflakes on the pane
Speeds the napping with their rapping
 To the lullaby refrain:
 "Good-night, my love, good-night;
 Until the morning light
Shall wake thy soul from dreamland's troll,
 Good-night, my love, good-night."

FAITH.

OF TIMES in the quiet hour,
As I sit
Thinking thoughts that vainly tower,
As they flit,
T'ward the ultimate solution
Of the mystery of life,
Of biotic evolution,
With its incidental strife;
Thinking thoughts so high transcending,
Thinking thoughts so deep descending,
Till the finite mind is pending
In unfathomable space;

Oftimes when I thus sit musing
In the night,
While my thoughts themselves are losing
In their flight
For the knowledge that is hidden
From the philosophic ken,
The omniscieny forbidden
The mentality of men,
Like the soul's illumination
Comes a peaceful consolation
In the subtle inspiration
Of the dream of one whose face

In the lovely picture smiling
 By my side
Seems in tenderness beguiling
 Me to bide
With the faith she loves so dearly,
 With her faith, that sheds its light
As a star that shines most clearly
 In the darkest depths of night,
Till her silent, soothing power,
Like the perfume of a flower,
Draws me nearer to the bower
 Of her perfect faith and grace.

THE CANDLE OF MORTALITY.

F^AINTLY now, then brightly shining,
 So it burns itself away,
Life and death in one combining
 To produce the vital ray;
For while living it is dying
 And in dying 't lives and glows;
Thus is death its life supplying,
 Thus does life its death impose.
Without both there can not be
 Aught but dull nonentity.

EVENTIDE.

DEPARTING sun has kissed the earth good-night
And slowly fades the blush upon her face,
As one by one, with pale and timid light,
The silent stars peep forth from unknown space
To blossom in the meadows of the sky,
While o'er the world a dreamy stillness falls,
As nature in her subtle lullaby
All life in peaceful drowsiness enthralls.
Now fades the ling'ring twilight of the sun
And stealthy shadows tenderly transume
The varied forms and colors into one
And hush the whisp'ring melodies in gloom;
Till over all there comes a silence deep
And gently falls the tranquil earth to sleep.

THE CALENDAR OF LIFE.

BLUSHINGLY the hopes of life blossom into view;
Tenderly the mellow years dim their rosy hue;
Mournfully they slowly fade with the dreamy past;
Silently the shadows fall over all at last.

A SUMMER SHOWER.

SIDE by side they walk together,
Heeding not the frowning weather
Of a summer's parting day,
As the birds are nestward winging
And the woodland softly ringing
In a lulling roundelay.

On his lips a question hovers,
She her love with blushes covers,
Tremblingly they hesitate;
When the rain, in sudden drenching—
Passion's ardor rudely quenching,—
Downward beats importunate.

So the words remain unspoken
And love's quietude unbroken,
Leaving two hearts lone and free.
Thus has fate the potent power
Through a simple summer shower
So to change life's destiny.

ACROSS THE WAY.

THOUGH ev'ry day,
 Across the way,
 She flits athwart my vision,
Sweet, debonair,
 With golden hair
And charming indecision—

 Though ev'ry day,
 Across the way,
I catch her shyly peeping,
 While she, in turn,
 Doth me discern,
Whene'er a watch I'm keeping—

 Though ev'ry day,
 Across the way,
Whate'er has been the weather,
 Through summer's glow
 And winter's snow,
Our thoughts have been together—

Yet when we meet
Upon the street,

We recognition smother,
Because, you see,
Unhappily,
We do not know each other.

THE DAISY.

ALONE by the meadow a little white flower
Awakes from its sleep to peep forth from its
bower;

'Tis only a daisy, which nature has told
To harbor the secret its death will unfold.

Beside the bright meadow a sad little maiden—
Sweet Gretchen—is passing, her heart heavy laden;
She spies the lone daisy and forward she springs
And plucking its petals she eagerly sings:

“Er liebt mich, ganz innig, von Herzen, mit
Schmerzen,
Klein wenig, und gar nicht; er liebt mich, von Her-
zen !”

Dear Gretchen rejoices, her sorrows depart,
For the soul of the daisy now blooms in her heart.

CLOUDLAND.

I'M standing by the gate, dear,
Where once we stood before
And listened to the rippling song
Of wavelets on the shore
And watched the gath'ring clouds, dear,
That o'er the mountain stole,
To read above on wings of love
The fortunes of our soul;

For then our hearts were one, dear,
Bound with a single thought—
To live and love and love and live
As only love had taught;
And so, within the sky, dear,
In cloudland far away,
'Mid rosy beams we dreamed the dreams
Of love's long summer day.

We saw the snowy peaks, dear,
Of airy mountains high,
With fairy streams and cataracts,
That sparkled in the sky;
And by the em'rald seas, dear,
We saw the castles bright,

Whose towers bold seemed made of gold
Amid the fading light.

Then saw we gardens fair, dear,
Where countless flowers grew,
While silv'ry brooks seemed murmuring
Through fields of golden hue,
And music seemed to fall, dear,
In gentle, mellow spray,
As tinkling bells o'er fairy fells
In cloudland far away.

I see the clouds again, dear,
In all their wondrous art,
But, like the hopes and joys of life,
They come but to depart;
The mountains fade in mist, dear,
The crumbling castles fall,
While oceans grand and fairyland
Fast fade beyond recall.

And so they pass away, dear,
The dreams of life and love,
That for a moment hid from view
The endless night above;
And thus they are absorbed, dear,
Within the boundless sea,
Where life and thought and love are nought
E'en to eternity.

FORGOTTEN.

A SHADOWED mound
Of mold'ring ground,
A churchyard solitary;
A crumbling stone
That bears alone
The faded name of Mary.

A sudden dream,
A flitting gleam,
A vision dim and airy;
One ling'ring thought
On which is wrought
The once-loved name of Mary.

ARCANUM.

EACH man does in his life some thought control,
Unreached by love or fear, by priest or pelf,
That speaks to him alone, when in his soul
He holds a mute communion with himself.

TO-MORROW.

HOPEFUL youth with rosy face
Struggling in the mortal race,
Never wearied, never tired;
Ever by the thought inspired,
That for ev'ry pain we borrow
Comes redemption in the morrow;
Sacrificing strength and soul,
Striving, striving for the goal
That awaits the life to-morrow;
Spurning flowers of to-day
For the blossoms' rich array
Of to-morrow, of to-morrow.

Listless age with withered face
Drifting in the mortal race,
Worn and helpless, lone and weary,
Gazing through the shadows dreary
Of the long, long night of sorrow
For the sunrise of the morrow;
Drifting, drifting to the sea
Of eternal mystery,
While the world repeats, "To-morrow."
Thus it speeds the soul from strife,
Thus it greets the new-born life,
With "To-morrow," aye, to-morrow.

THERE'S A SONG IN MY HEART.

THERE'S a song in my heart
That will never depart
With the echoes of melodies dead;
'Tis the song of the mill
In the old miller's trill
As he labored each day for his bread.
'Mid the splash of the wheel
And the roll of the reel,
And the waters that noisily sped,
Came the miller's old croon
In the rhythmical tune
Of the hum of the mill in its tread—

“ Work and sing while there's light,
While there's hope in the breast,
For the day will take flight
And there's coming a night
When the toiler will go to his rest.”

But the miller and mill
Now forever are still,
For the miller has long passed away
And his mill by the stream,
As a memory's dream,
Is departing in silent decay.

Yet the purl of the brook
And the breath from each nook
Breathe the soul of his quieted lay
In a threnody low
For the weary who go
To their rest at the end of the day—

“Work and sing while there's light, &c.”

There's a song in my heart
That will never depart,
Though the sound of the music has fled;
'Tis the song of the mill
In the old miller's trill,
Though the mill and the miller are dead.
'Mid the passing of years,
With the smiles and the tears
That have come and have lingered and sped,
Comes the memoried croon
In the mutable tune
Of the throbbing of life in its tread—

“Work and sing while there's light, &c.”

TWO SOULS.

AS died the twilight of the day,
Two mortal spirits passed away.

Amid the luxuries of wealth,
With flick'ring hopes of better health,
'Mid all that love and gold could buy,
With friends and dear ones ever nigh,
'Mid watchful, tender, loving care,
Physicians' skill and clergy's prayer,
She smiled and died.

Full mournfully the bells were tolled,
Fond, hopeful hearts grew drear and cold,
While over all the busy land
The sad news flashed on ev'ry hand,
And people sorrowed, mourned and wept
For her who now in silence slept
Beyond the tide.

Without a home, without a friend
To shelter or to comfort lend,
Within starvation's deadly grasp,
As to her breast in frenzied clasp

She pressed her lifeless infant boy—
Her only spark of earthly joy,—
 She wept and died.

No loving voice, no tolling bell,
No sound, no sign to bid farewell,
No sobbing heart, no sad despair,
No burning tear, no one to care,
No one to grieve, no one to pray
For her who thus had passed away
 Beyond the tide.

And so two spirits went to rest,
As died the twilight in the west.

SIMPLICITY.

AROUND the board in childish stare
He watched the guests with thoughtful face
 Bow low their heads, as if in prayer,
 To say their solemn, silent grace;
And folding then his little hands,
While meekly drooped his curly head,
He, too, as one who understands,
Spoke softly to himself and said:
 “ Now I lay me down to sleep,
 I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to keep.”

NESCIENCE.

I AM waiting, I am waiting by the riverside alone
For the voice of one whose spirit like a dulcet
breath has flown.
I am waiting, I am waiting by her lonely sepulcher,
Where the music of the forest breathes the requiem
for her,
Where the waters of the river whisper ever from
the deep
Of the burial, perennial, impenetrable sleep,
While the antiphon of heaven knells the dirge of
parted breath
And the stars in awful silence tell of everlasting
death;
Still I'm waiting, oh, I'm waiting, for a message
from her soul
'Mid the murmur of the waters in their weird,
eternal dole.

I am waiting, I am waiting by the dark, sepulchral
stream
In the fearful fascination of a melancholy dream,
As I yearn and ever hearken in a ponderable fear
By the river in its purling so mellifluously drear

For a token from my loved one, that the love of
parted souls
Holds communion with the living and their destiny
controls;
But the gurgle of the current in its dolorific flow
Is the only sound that answers through the dark-
ness cold and low,
While I'm waiting, sadly dreaming, 'neath the
stars' frigidic stare,
By the tomb of my beloved in the anguish of
despair.

A FAIRYLAND TALE.

“I’LL not go to bed,” she had playfully said,
While clambering up on my knee,
“’Till fairyland tale of a beautiful dale
You tell all alone now to me.”

The moon's pallid light through the deepening night
Entangled itself in her hair
And it kissed her face in the tremulous trace
Of a soul that had parted fore'er.

“ A fairyland tale of a beautiful dale
Before you jump into your bed ?
Then listen, my dear, ere the brownies draw near
And the wily old sandman has fled.

“ A long time ago, when the days were aglow
With mystical music and mirth,
The elfin of love on a fairyland dove
Stole two loving hearts from the earth.

“ Far over the sand of the lullaby land,
With its little dream fairies aglee,
They traveled afar by the light of a star
Beyond the deep, billowy sea.

“ For a paradise fair was awaiting them there—
The flowerland garden of love,—
Where the heather bells ring and the meadow brooks
sing
With the melodies floating above;

“ Where the moon's gentle beams are the silvery
streams
That enripple the dreams of the morn,
And the starry lights tell of the angels that dwell
In the realm where the flowers are born;

“ Where the dewdrops of light are the thoughts of
the night
That awaken the blossoms of hope;

Where the sunbeams repose in the blush of the rose
And the scent of the heliotrope.

“ It was here that they walked and they sang and
they talked

With the birds and the posies and brooks,
O'er the hills and the vales and the mellowy dales
And the musical, tunable nooks.

“ But at length, one sad day, as they happened to
stray

Far out on the fairyland lea,
They heard the deep roar on a far-away shore
Of a strange and a wonderful sea.

“ And then, hand in hand, they went down to the
sand

Where the ocean rolls out to the night,
And there as they gazed, trembling, frightened,
amazed,

In the gloom of the vanishing light,

“ A grim phantom dark in a shadowy bark
Stole silently over the deep

And closer it drew t'ward the terrified two
As a vision that comes in a sleep.

“ Ere either could fly or could whisper good-bye,
The phantom had flitted afore

With one loving heart to forever depart
From the other alone on the shore.

“ ‘ Stay, loved one,’ he cried, but the murmuring
tide

Only bubbled and gurgled and purred,
While gloominess fell like a dolorous spell
All over the fairyland world.

“ While this, as you know, was a long time ago—
Yes, long before you came to be,—
Yet every night with a glimmering light
He walks by the wonderful sea,

“ All alone there to weep, when the world is asleep,
By the ocean’s chill, witherful spray,
Where aching hearts yearn for a moment’s return
Of the souls that have drifted away.

“ And now, little one, as my story is done,
Come, scamper away to your fold,
There to travel once more to the lullaby shore
And forget the strange tale I have told.”

“ Then is it not true what you’ve told of the two?”
She queried in whisperings frail;

“ No, no,” I replied, as I wearily sighed,
“ ’Tis only a fairyland tale.”

THE CHRISTMAS ROSE.

WHEN birds and butterflies have fled
And leaves and flowers all are dead,
When meadows sleep beneath the snow,
And woodland brooks no longer flow,
Then comes the dainty Christmas rose.

Loved child of nature's tender care,
Fond, fragile, fragrant, frail and fair,
Enraptured wakes to smile and die
Beneath the winter's cruel sky;
So blooms the lovely Christmas rose.

The incarnation of a breath,
Sweet life communing with its death,
The timid kiss that winter stole
From blushing summer's fleeting soul—
This is the gentle Christmas rose.

EPITHALAMIUM.

'Twas nought but a word—a lone whispered word,—
Which only one heart in the universe heard;
But it fastened the link that none can dis sever,
Enclasp ing two souls in a union forever.

FOR THE LIGHT IS GROWING DIM.

YES, dear, I hear the tolling of the ev'ning
 chapel bell,
 I hear the far-off voices and the murmurs of
 the dell,
I hear the nesting swallows as they flit and lightly
 skim
Amid the gath'ring shadows, for the light is grow-
 ing dim.

Come, sing to me the music of the days of long
 ago,
While daylight gently lingers where the twilight
 breezes blow;
O, sing to me, my darling, in the words of love's
 old hymn,
Ere parting day hath vanished—for the light is
 growing dim.

Come hither! aye, draw closer, dear, that we may
 nearer be!
Methought in fearful fantasy, that thou hadst gone
 from me;

That I was here all lonely with the shadows gray
and grim;
That day had sped forever—for the light is growing
dim.

Ah, yes, 'twas but a vision of the joy of faded
years,
Nought but the dream remaining with the heart's
embittered tears;
Nought but the spirit yearning through eternity for
him,
While thought and life are waning—for the light is
growing dim.

ATHANASIA.

THE tender flower of the summer's glade—
Fond afterthought of winter's icy sting,—
Lives but to bloom and blossoms but to fade,
That from its tomb another life may spring.

LIBERTY.

THERE is on earth no liberty so great
But that its very greatness, soon or late,
Doth lend the means whereby the favored free
Convert their freedom into tyranny.

THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

O'ER the bridge across the water
Comes the miller's pretty daughter,
Lightly tripping, gaily skipping o'er
the hurly-burly stream,
Where the morning sun is sipping
And the shadows gently dipping,
As she hums a little ditty like the murmur of a
dream.

How her merry blue eyes twinkle
At the sprinkle and the tinkle
Of the music of the ripples 'neath her dancing toe
and heel;
How she sings and laughs with pleasure
At the tantalizing measure,
At the dashing and the plashing of the splashing
water wheel.

Ah, this charming little maiden,
With her heart so lightly laden,
Steals the hearts of all the laddies, all the laddies on
the hill,

While the jealous country lasses
Frown upon her as she passes
And they toss their saucy tresses when a-coming by
the mill.

But the miller's pretty daughter,
Like the purling, whirling water,
Never stays nor cares to listen to the words they
have to say,
Caring nought for lass or laddie,
Caring only for her daddie,
While she's tripping, while she's skipping, gaily
tripping on her way.

LIFE'S ETERNITY.

EACH life is to itself eternal,
Aware of neither birth nor death:
Howe'er remote the search internal,
It knows not of its waking breath,
Nor does it know when falls the curtain
Upon the thought that was to be,
And thus within its sphere uncertain
Each life is an eternity.

THE VINES.

IN childhood's assurance, our fate to forestall,
 We planted two vines by an old garden wall.

'Mid tears of the night and 'mid joys of the sun,
 The vines closer grew till they twined into one.

In union endearing they mingled above—
 Prophetic fulfillment of predestined love.

* * * * *

The vines are still clinging in sweet unity
 (The one was for her and the other for me),

But time hath uncoupled her name from my mind
 And altered the destiny love had divined.

!

APHRODITE.

DIVINE duality, that doth alloy
 With chilling curse her fervent prayer;
 That burns the quickened soul with fulgent joy
 To leave the ashes of despair!

LOVE.

THOUGH we should know when first the light
Awoke the everlasting night
Upon the silent, pregnant earth,
And sentient life was given birth,
Though we should know when first the soul
Fell captive to the world's control,
When love, its spirit to impart,
First thrilled the wond'ring mortal heart,
We would not know when love began;
For love was here to welcome man.

Before the earth had once revolved,
Before the stars had been evolved,
Yea, e'en before the birth of time,
Love breathed in harmony sublime
Upon the dark, amorphous sea
Of motionless infinity.

Love is the deep, eternal source
Of vital and of cosmic force,
From whence has sprung all that exists,
The power that fore'er persists
In that which is and is to be—
The essence of eternity.

HOW DIFFERENT.

HOW different we
Would all of us be
Could we know of the future await-
ing
To sever the ties
That at present comprise
The life that our hopes are creating.

How many a word
Would remain unheard,
How many a sentence unspoken;
How many a thought
Would remain unwrought,
How many a promise unbroken.

How many a heart
Would its feelings impart
And hold them no longer in keeping,
But would gladly express
The love we repress
Till the spirit forever is sleeping.

How many an act
We would now retract,
How many a selfish emotion,

To joyfully bear
Vexation and care
With patience and loving devotion.

How different we
Would all of us be
Could we look o'er the graves of the morrow,
Could we look from the light
To the infinite night,
From the joy to the infinite sorrow.

GOLDEN-ROD.

HIDING by the woodland rill,
Decking meadow, lane and hill,
To enclasp the flitting rays
Of September's gilded days,
That it may immortalize
Glories of the summer skies.

Sun-kissed flower of the field;
Summer's gift to Autumn's weald;
Golden link that interweaves
Thoughts of Spring with fallen leaves;
Queen of all the wildwood sod—
Wondrous, peerless golden-rod.

GERALDINE.

HEAR her dainty little feet
Pat'ring up and down the street,
Scamp'ring o'er the dusty way,
Tripping now in happy play,
Dancing to some childish song,
Frisking now in haste along,
Skipping on the terrace green—
Lovely little Geraldine.

Eyes that flash with saucy mirth,
Shine like little stars on earth;
Rosy lips with sparkling pearls,
Nut-brown hair that seldom curls,
Dainty form and winning grace,
Sweet, aristocratic face;
Tout ensemble, little queen—
Lovely little Gerladine.

Tiny feet in slippers red,
Sunbeams smiling on her head,
As she trips sedately by
Seeming not to see me nigh,
Or, in bashful, artful play,
Looks and laughs and runs away;

Sweet coquette with baby mien—
Lovely little Geraldine.

And at night when all is still,
Save the crickets' dreamy trill,
Twinkling stars look down and peep
On a little form asleep,
Tired out with merry play,
Floating now in dreams away
To some distant fairy scene—
Lovely little Geraldine.

THE TOKEN.

THERE are no words unspoken
To tell my love for thee;
But ne'er can fond love's token
In mortal language be.

The tongue can not confess it,
No song my love can tell;
Yet though no words express it,
Thy heart doth know it well.

True love can ne'er be broken,
And as thou lovest me,
Thou art thyself the token
Of my dear love for thee.

A LITTLE GIRL.

A LITTLE, bright-eyed, winsome girl,
Whose golden hair in tangled curl
(An aureole of artless grace)
Caressed her dimpled, thoughtful face,
As earnestly she moved about
While sorting clothes and playthings out—
Sweet baby garments, laid away
As sacred to another day,
And remnants of some jingling toys,
That had forever ceased their noise,—
And these she placed with loving care
Within a little cradle bare.

“Whose pretty things are these?” I said;
“For surely, you’ve outgrown them all,
And this small crib’s too wee a bed
For one who’s over three feet tall.”

“They are not mine,” she answered low;
“They are for baby brother dear,
Who went away, I s’pose you know,
A long, long time ago, last year.
They said I’d see him ’gain some day;
But just what day, nobody knew;

They said he'd gone far, far away—

I dess it must be miles, don't you?

But I's been waiting for him, though—

I dess it's been twelve months or ten;

I's had my birfday weeks ago

And soon it will be here again.

But now I's going to make his bed

And hang his little dresses near

And fix a pillow for his head

And put his spools and playthings here,

'Tause he'll be back on 'Tris'mas day—

Oh, yes, it's really, truly so;

He's found some one to lead the way

And he'll be here that day, I know.

“How do I know?”—a thoughtful pause.

“You will not tell?—Well, 'tause, you see,

I wrote to dear, old Santa Claus

To bring the baby back to me.”

CONSOLATION.

BENEATH the tears of winter's weeping,

A summer blossom may be sleeping;

A bud unseen 'mid storm and shower,

To be some day a radiant flower.

THE BEGGAR'S THANKSGIVING.

AS from the church in mellow strain the tuneful
anthem stole,

The beggar's heart grew young again and
stirred his slumb'ring soul

With memories of bygone years, with visions
bright and clear

Of happy days long, long ago, when life and love
were near.

Again he hears the joyous bells upon Thanksgiving
Day,

Again he hears the merry birds in chirping rounde-
lay,

As walking by his mother's side, his little hand in
hers,

He greets upon the narrow street the good, old
villagers.

Again he sees the little church, with ivy-covered
tower,

Again he sees the old town clock and hears the
tolling hour,

While silently the people pass within the welcome
door

To plain, uncushioned benches on a bare, unpol-
ished floor.

Again he feels the love of God, long faded in his
breast,

Again he feels the thrill divine of heaven's hope
and rest;

The world again grows bright and fair, and charity
and love

Once more enchain the smiling earth with paradise
above.

Again he hears his mother's voice, that dear, sweet,
loving voice,

Amid the singing of the hymn that made his heart
rejoice;

Yea, e'en the same old hymn sublime, that now
came to his ears,

As tremblingly he stood without, his dim eyes
filled with tears.

The music ceased; thanks had been said within the
church walls dim;

But all day long, 'mid cold and want, he heard the
sweet, old hymn,

And in the stillness of the night, an angel passed
that way

And carried home one thankful soul upon Thanks-
giving Day.

GENESIS.

EACH one was perched upon a box and slowly
 swung his leg,
 While wrestling with the problem of the
 chicken and the egg.
They reasoned and they argued it, yet neither one
 could say
Which was the first, the egg or chick, upon cre-
 ation day;
“Because,” said one, “without a hen an egg there
 can not be;”
“But,” t’other said, “it takes an egg to make a
 hen, you see!”
In vain they strove to fathom it, in vain they sought
 to guess,
Until another, sitting by in quiet thoughtfulness,
With innocent assurance said, while whittling on a
 peg,
“I’ll tell you fellows how it was: I guess God laid
 the egg.”

TOO LATE.

A FALT'RING tongue;
The note is sung
Too late.

An act deferred,
A laggard word,
An unresolved endeavor;
The day has gone,
The world moves on—
Too late, too late, forever.

A heart repressed;
The love confessed
Too late.

A touch withheld,
An impulse quelled,
The links of life dissever;
The soul has gone,
The world moves on—
Too late, too late, forever.

SHADOWS.

EVENING shadows in their flitting,
In their flitting to and fro,
Seem to whisper and to beckon—
Beckon us to come and go;
For they tell in noiseless cadence,
In a noiseless, mystic rhyme,
To the heart of joy or sorrow
Soon or late there comes a time

When the daylight fades to twilight
And the twilight into night,
And the shadows gently bury
Earthly memories from sight;
When the day of life is ended,
When the gulf of life is spanned,
And the soul returns forever
To the silent shadow-land.

SUNBEAMS.

O'ER the tempest's angry gushing,
Through the clouded veil of night,
Steal the sunbeams softly blushing.
Comes the restful morning light;
Struggling with their gentle power
Through the darkened forest sod,
They unfold the hidden flower—
Wake the slumb'ring thought of God.

Unto ev'ry human sorrow
Comes at length the peaceful ray,
Comes the promise of the morrow,
Comes the dawning of the day,
That in stealing through the portal
Of the shadowed night of dole
Wakes to hope and life immortal
Latent glories of the soul.

SONG OF THE RIVER.

AS I stand by the stream in its murmuring flow
And watch the stray beams of the moon as
they glow

And they glimmer and shimmer in ghostly array
On the turbulent water e'er rolling away,
As the night's palling breath, with its funeral moan
In the dole of a soul that is dying alone,
Chills my breast with a trembling, ineffable fear,
There comes a strange sound, a strange voice to
mine ear.

'Tis the voice of the river that calls to me there,
Enthrilling and filling my heart with despair;
Oh, the river is calling and drawing me near
With a melody strangely, alluringly drear,
And this is the song that it murmurs to me
As it rolls o'er the shoals on its way to the sea:

“Come, oh, come from the world with its trouble
and strife;

Cast into oblivion the bubble of life;
Come to rest on my breast in the ocean of sleep,
In the ocean so peaceful, so great and so deep,
That self, reabsorbed in the infinite soul,
Ne'er awakens again to earth's bitter control.

Ah, life's but a struggle from cradle to tomb,
A striving and driving through torment and gloom,
While man's but a creature of torture and pain,
Discerning, yet yearning for heaven in vain;
For the light of a day is the shadow of years
And the one happy smile is a fountain of tears—
E'er the greater the pleasure, the greater the woe
That follows the loss of the joy that must go.
Man is born but to die and the grave is the end,
Whate'er be the length of the path he may wend;
Yet he battles and toils with the world and its hate,
E'er hoping and groping 'gainst pitiless fate,
While he labors and strives and he suffers and fears
'Mid the care and despair and the burden of years,
When the meed for his struggles that end with his
breath

Is nothing, aye, nothing, but infinite death !
Then, oh flee from this scene of malevolent gloom !
Why stay and delay the inex'orable doom ?
Come, oh, come to me now, to my welcome embrace
And my waters shall smother and cover thy face
And banish forever the phantom of life
With the chains and the pains of a merciless strife!"

So the river is lulling and luring my soul,
While low, like the flow, knells the tremulous toll
Of the funeral bell far away in the lone—
The knelling and telling of life that has flown.

Yea, the river sings sadly, yet madly and clear
Dark visions are becking and calling me near:
“ Oh, come to me, come to me, come to my breast!
Aye, come to the river, the giver of rest ! ”
See ! the waters are boiling and toiling to meet,
To meet me, to greet me and further entreat,
And the river is welling and swelling its deep
To grasp me and clasp me forever in sleep,
While lapping and purling and hurling it sings
And splashing and dashing it stealthily clings,
E'er palling, enthralling and calling to me,
While whirling and swirling its way to the sea.

THE FAN.

I HELD her fan, as by the hill
We mused in quiet thought,
A-list'ning to the trickling rill
With lulling music fraught.
Thus as we sat in language starved
'Neath nature's dreamy ban,
I, quite unthinking, slowly carved
My name upon the fan.

The deed was done and, though unmeant,
I could not help but fear
That she might captiously resent
So bold a souvenir.
And yet it proved not troublesome,
For by love's happy plan,
The name I carved has since become
Her name upon the fan.

MUSIC.

IS music nought but cold, material sound
Rung forth in euphony to please the ear?
Or may within its harmonies be found
The voice that whispers from the unknown sphere
Of life and immortality—
The soul's bright ideality?
Full oft some simple melody or chime,
As pealing from the organ, grand, sublime,
Or stealing from some plaintive voice unknown,
Or e'en a whisp'ring zephyr quickly flown,
Enthrills with ecstasy the list'ning mind
And, like a flitting phantom strangely old,
There comes a vision vague and undefined,
That fills the heart with longing uncontrolled—
Some dim-remembered scene or place,
Some once-familiar form or face,—

Entrancing now the mind's enraptured gaze
With tantalizing images of days
Long since departed with the dreamy mist
That setting sun of yesterday has kissed.
Is it the knowledge of these days returned,
Or is it but the vision of a dream,
Whose impress on the brain had been unlearned
Till brightened by the music's quick'ning theme?
Or may it be transcendent memory
Of pre-existent life in faint rehearse,
As throbs the chord of dark infinity
That binds the soul with all the universe
And pulses with supernal life
Beyond the spirit's mortal strife,
Whene'er departing melodies of earth,
In sombre symphony or mellow mirth,
But touch in unison the vital note
Uniting distant worlds howe'er remote?
So does the soul, that ne'er before gave sign
Of joy or love, but slumbered on unknown,
Awake one day within the clasp divine
Of some electric, sympathetic tone,
To hear amid earth's jarring throng
The harmony of nature's song;
As does the touch of heaven's breath unfold
The hidden bud, though seeming dead and cold,
And brings to light, in mystery combined,
A life and beauty none had e'er divined.

WHY?

WHY do we love?
To float for one fond moment in a blissful
dream
And wake to find another ceaseless memory?
To kindle flames, that darker may the darkness
be,
And warble songs, that deeper may the silence
seem?
To learn that joy is ever sorrow's womb?
To know that grief is but affection's tomb?—
For such is love.

Why do we live?
To blindly battle with a destiny ordained—
Weak captives on the treadmill of a bounded
sphere?
To point the way to paradise, and linger here
To furnish to the worms all that the soul has
gained?
To pass to earth while reaching t'ward the sky?
To prattle of eternity, and die?—
For such is life.

INNOCENCE.

IN bonny Scotland o'er the sea, upon a summer's
day,
A little maid trudged merrily along the public
way;

And for the first time in her life, this happy peasant
lass
Gazed on the world beyond her home in yonder
mountain pass.

With beaming face and cheery song she tripped
on t'ward the town
In time to reach the turnpike gate before the sun
went down.

She gently tapped upon the bar, afraid to pass it
by,
Awaiting patiently without for someone to reply.

And when she saw the gateman come with kind
inquiring mien,
She asked, " Pray, will you tell me, sir, am I at
Aberdeen? "

“That’s where you are, my bonny lass,” he
answered with a grin;
“Then will you tell me, sir,” she cried, “if Peggy
is within?”

HE KISSED MY HAND.

WITH outstretched hand I said good-bye
And hid with smiles the heart-felt sigh
Of love’s command.

I heard not how he bade adieu,
I only felt, I only knew
He kissed my hand.

Though many years have flown since then
And we may never meet again
Upon this land,
No time nor sorrow can destroy
The brightness of that moment’s joy—
He kissed my hand.

FALLEN LEAVES.

SPECTRES of a throng
Ever banished
With the years;
Echoes of a song
That has vanished
With the tears.

Dreams in dreary haze
Dimly sifted
Through the light;
Shadows of the days
That have drifted
Into night.

Thoughts from childhood's page
Softly prating
To and fro;
Fantasies of age
Mutely waiting
For the snow.

AFFINITY.

I MET her on the crowded street;
A smile, a bow,
As passing people ever greet,
And yet, somehow
Her look, her glance, her smiling face,
Sweet loveliness and gentle grace
Are with me now.

As did a flitting sunbeam light
The darkened way;
Though but a moment in its flight,
Its soul doth stay
Embodied in some heart-born flower,
That gathered to its pregnant bower
The quick'ning ray.

EGO.

WHATE'ER may be each life's divergent course,
All human acts, however small or great,
Have in the love of self a common source
And prove the unity of love and hate.

THE LIGHT DEPARTED.

THE world's merry laugh and the sunbeams clear
That ripple the infinite sea,
Are the echo sad and the shadows drear
Of a day that has gone from me;
For then we were four upon life's bright shore—
To-night, we are only three.

Fond memories come and the visions go
Like the dreams of an unhappy sleep,
The nebulous forms drifting to and fro
On the rocks where the wild billows leap,
The phantoms unreal that flittingly steal
Through the gloom of the limitless deep.

The chilling winds moan 'mid the breakers' roar
And now through the shadows I see
A life that goes out from the lives on shore
And I hear a voice calling to me,
As slowly the light fades into the night
Far out on the infinite sea.

And never again will the light return—
The light of a life that has flown,—

Though spirits may call and the heart may yearn
For the soul that has drifted alone
To infinite rest on the silent breast
Of the dark and the hidden unknown.

While the lips may smile and the cheeks may glow
As if from sad memory free,
The joys of the days of the long ago
Will never come back to me;
For then we were four upon life's bright shore—
To-night, we are only three.

RESERVATION.

THE deepest grief is that which doth conceal
With smiling heart the spirit's lifeless gloom,
Where silently the hidden tears congeal
To form at last their sorrow's welcome tomb.

DISILLUSION.

I SAW beside a meadow stream
A flower, which in fancy's dream
I oft had sought.
The beauties of the blossomed field
Or e'en the garden's rarest yield
To it were nought.

With ecstasy my heart was thrilled,
For in this flower was fulfilled
A life's desire;
Within its bosom there lay furled
A joy, which nought else in the world
Could e'er inspire.

With trembling hand I gently sought
To pluck this rare, incarnate thought
Of heaven born;
Yet ere I could the treasure clasp,
I felt within my loving grasp
A stinging thorn.

Poor mortal and illuded mind,
That had sweet happiness divined

With eager greed,
Awoke as from a mortal strife
To find the flower of my life
A common weed.

Strange, dual force, that can destroy
For all eternity the joy
So lately giv'n;
That doth create but to dispel—
That casts the throbbing soul to hell
In sight of heav'n.

HER NAME.

HER name, you say, is not so sweet
As Isabel or Marguerite,
Annette or Geraldine?
Ah well, and need I then reply,
That through the heart, and not the eye,
True loveliness is seen?

For you may have your Isabel
And all the pretty names that dwell
Within your fancy's frame,
But they with all their loveliness
Have not the power to express
The charm of her dear name.

CHANSONNETTE.

I SAW two silv'ry clouds, love,
Come sailing one by one,
As spirits soft that moved aloft
On t'ward the setting sun.
Methought in fancy's dream, love,
That they were you and I
Thus gliding on to love-land
Beyond the blushing sky.

Then floating side by side, love,
And ling'ring on the way
To greet the star that from afar
Stole forth to seal the day,
Still closer e'er they drew, love,
Until the day was done,
When fading into love-land
The two were only one.

THE EVENING STAR.

IT shines amid the light subdued
Upon the tranquil solitude,
Where, restful and alone,
Enshrouded in a stillness deep,
He sleeps the everlasting sleep
Within the great unknown.

It shines amid the light subdued
Upon the living multitude,
Where I remain alone—
Alone amid the worldly strife,
Enchained within the tomb of life,
With mem'ries overgrown.

Oh, that the time may not be far,
When with the faded ev'ning star,
Whose mellow light hath flown,
Another soul may take its flight
Unto the silent, boundless night,
To be no more alone.

FIVE APPLE SEEDS.

JUST five apple seeds! yes, five little seeds
To unfold to me fortune's decree:
Ah, how hard is my fate! oh, how bitter the
thought,
'Mid the joys I have sought and the hopes I have
wrought,
That my love should prove false unto thee!

For it's one that I love and it's two that I love
And it's three that I'm loving, I say,
And it's four that I love with the love of my
heart;
But a love that must part; yea, alas, it must part,
For with five I will cast thee away.

Just five apple seeds! yes, five little seeds
To unfold to me fortune's decree;
But how blind is my heart and how foolish am I
To thus drearily sigh when I clearly espy
That my fate has been trifling with me—

For it's one that I love and it's two that I love
And it's three that I'm loving, I say,

And it's four that I love with the love of my heart,
With a love ne'er to part! yes, a love ne'er to part,
For with five I will love thee for aye!

MY BOUTONNIÈRE.

MY boutonnière of pansies fair
Bespeaks to me a language rare,
For other minds may not perceive
Nor other hearts discover
The thoughts and songs that interweave
The fancies of an ardent lover.

While it may well to others tell
The secret of some garden dell,
To me it whisp'ring breathes of one—
Her loveliness expressing,—
The thought of whom is as the sun
The blossoms of the heart caressing.

DOLLY BELLE.

DOWN the lane beside the meadow where the
honeysuckle grows
With the daisies and the clover and the lovely
briar-rose.

While the violets are sleeping 'neath the shadow of
the dell.
Lived a little, blue-eyed maiden, known to me as
Dolly Belle.

Oh I met her lightly tripping, tripping e'er in merry
chase.

While the sunbeams through her tresses kissed her
rosy, dimpled face.

And the posies of the meadow where her fitting
footsteps fell

Nodded nods of nodding welcome to their loving
Dolly Belle.

And she took me to her garden to her garden down
the lane.

Where the cheery little songsters, in a chirruping
refrain.

And the flowers, by their blushes, loving secrets
tried to tell
To their charming, dainty mistress, lovely, little
Dolly Belle.

There she sang to them in carols, caroling so sweet
and clear,
That the gentle breath of heaven hushed its melody
to hear.
Life was all a mellow summer, all the world a quiet
dell
To this merry, fairy maiden, joyful, blithesome
Dolly Belle.

“Come,” I said, “and let us wander, wander far
and far away,
Where the roses never wither and the robins always
stay” —
For I loved this little maiden more than any words
can tell,—
But the jealous soul of nature claimed my darling
Dolly Belle.

Oft I ramble o’er the meadow as the daylight fades
away,
As the sunbeams faintly tremble on the edge of
parting day,
And I wander by the garden where the birds and
flowers dwell
Ever longing, ever waiting, for their angel Dolly Belle.

THE PLAINT OF WOMAN'S LOVE.

O WONDROUS love, that stirs the woman's
breast

With gentle kiss borne down from heav'n!
O tyranny of man, that hath suppressed
Expression of her love God-giv'n!

She dare not manifest by uttered word
The passions that her soul enthrill;
The music of her love is all unheard,
Earth's rarest melodies are still;

While he, upon an impulse, may proclaim
His simulated love, that glows
With vacillating and impassioned flame
In sordid aphroditic throes.

O vaunting man, who hath by cruelty
Made cruel even love so fair,
That it doth blight the life it came to free—
A curse upon its own sweet prayer.





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